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CANADIAN VANISHING COMMUNITIES

CULTIVATORS AND TRADERS OF THE EASTERN WOODLANDS

·WINIFRED FERRY·

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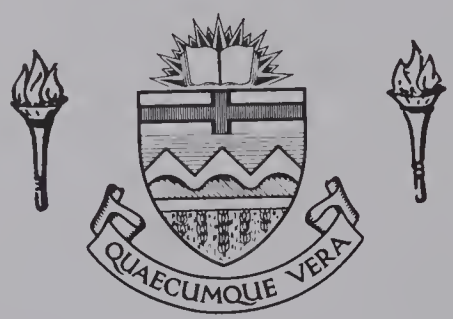

CANADIAN VANISHING COMMUNITIES

CULTIVATORS AND TRADERS OF THE EASTERN WOODLANDS

·WINIFRED FERRY·

GLC Publishers Limited

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Maps: Sheila Huard

Illustrations: Acorn Technical Art

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This book is about a Huron family who lived in the Eastern woodlands of what is now Southern Ontario. It describes the main activities of this family during one year. No longer do the Huron live as they once did. This book will help you understand how these cultivators and traders lived in the area known as Huronia.

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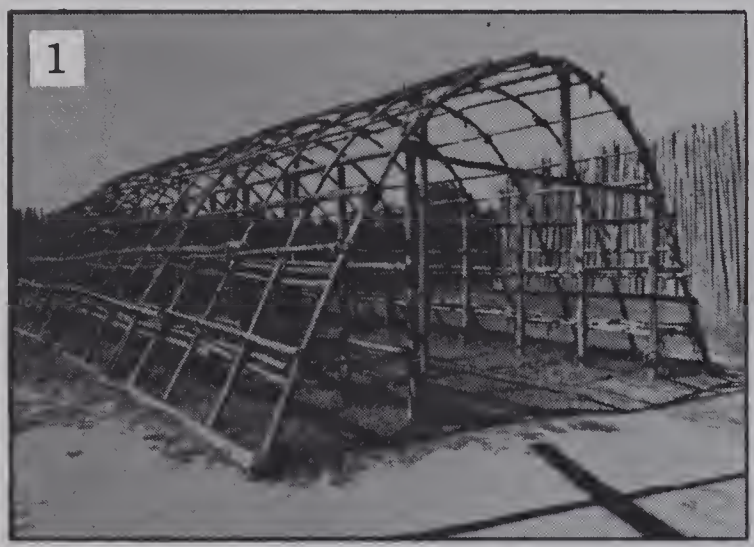
ACTIVITY 1

Long Owl is a member of a Huron group.

1. Long Owl and some other men are building a new house. It is called a longhouse. Picture 1 shows the frame of the longhouse.

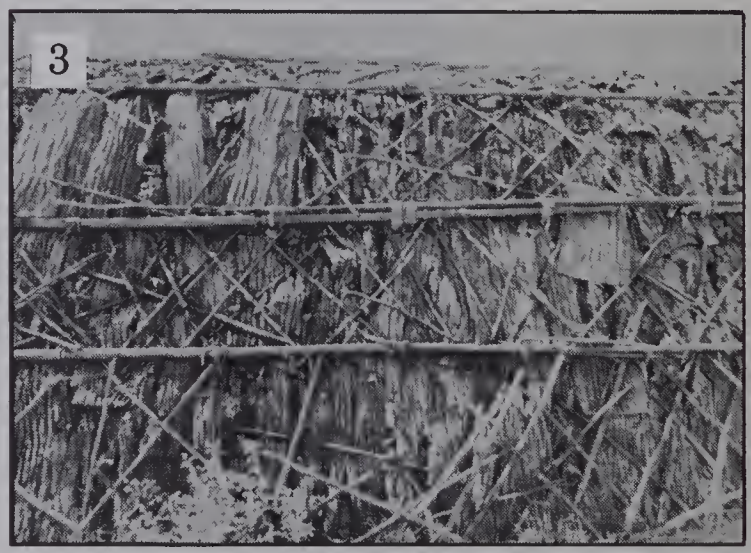


(a) What materials are used to build the frame?
(b) Why is it called a longhouse?

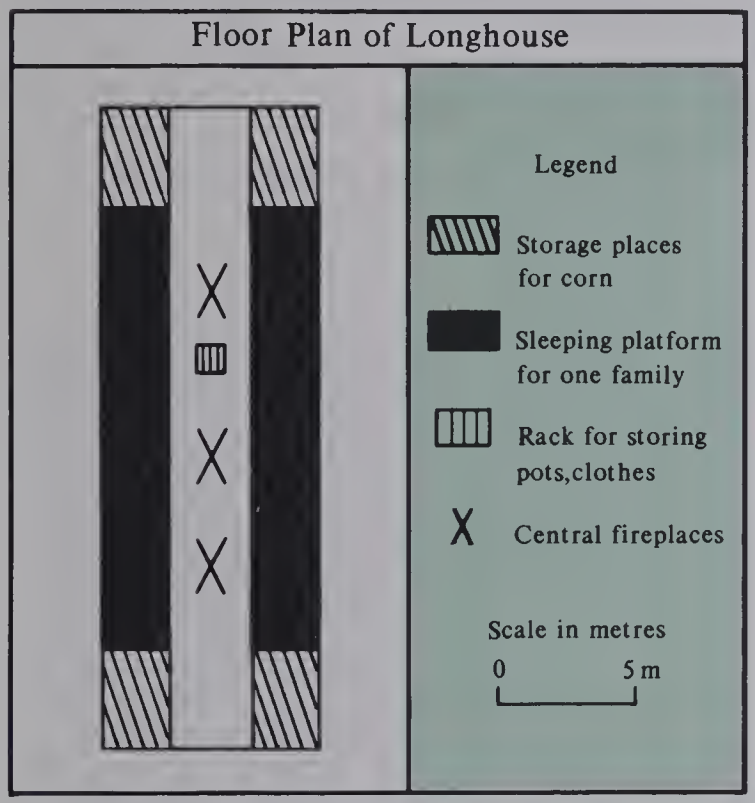
2. Long Owl and the other men have completed the longhouse.

(a) What material have they used to cover the frame of wooden poles? Picture 2 and 3 will help you.

(b) How is the covering held to the frame? Picture 3 will help you.
(c) What shape is the longhouse?



3. This floor plan shows the longhouse without the support poles or bark covering.



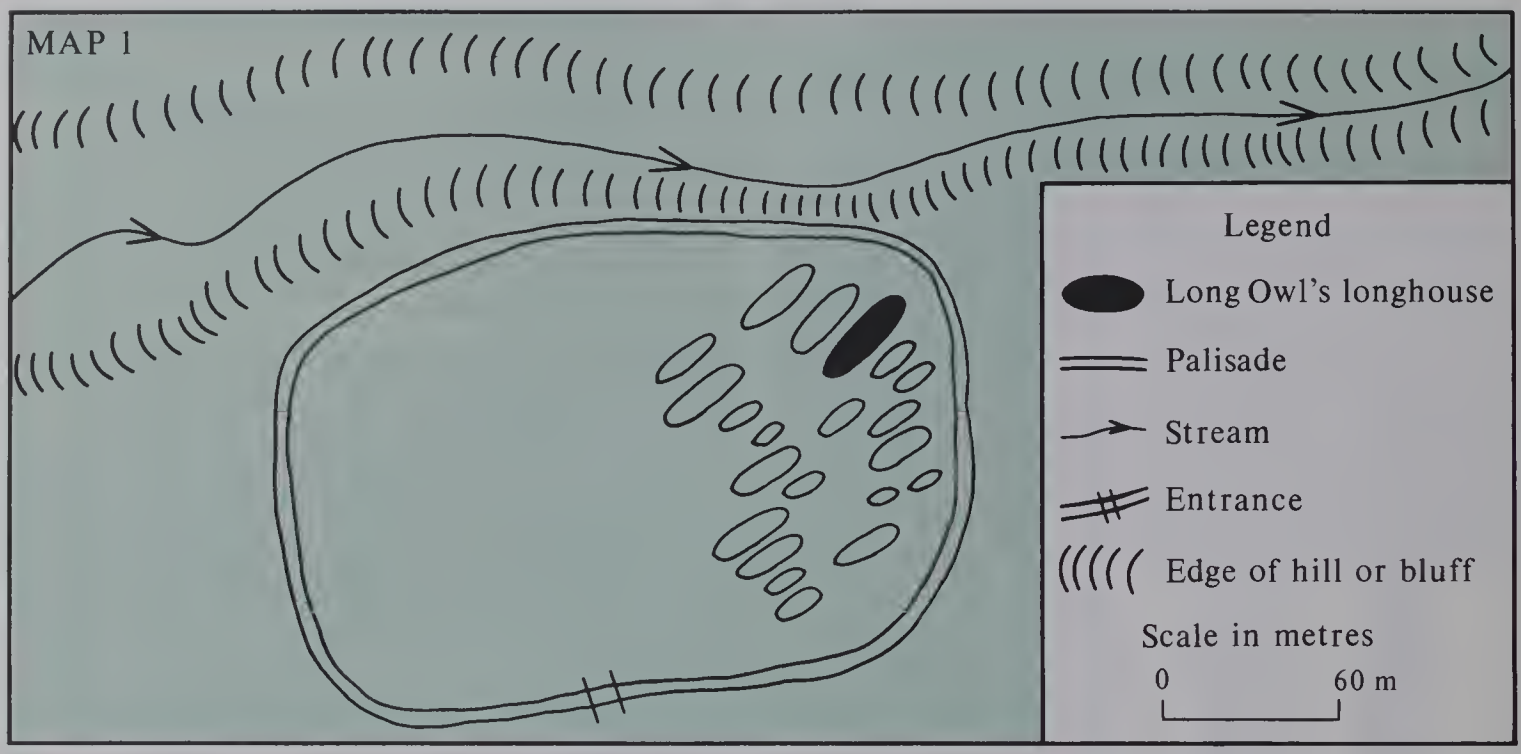
(a) Name two uses of the longhouse. Use the legend to help you.
(b) How can you tell from the map that many people live in the longhouse?
(c) What is the length of the longhouse? What is its width? Compare its length and width to your classroom.
(d) In what ways is the longhouse different from your home?

4. The longhouse is also used to store different things.
(a) Which storage places can you find on the floor plan?
— storage pits for corn,
— storage rack for pots, clothes,
— storage space under sleeping platform for firewood,
— storage places for corn at end of longhouse.
(b) In which part of your home do you store these things:

clothes
food
tools
pots and pans
bicycles

5. (a) In your notebook draw a picture of a longhouse.
(b) Mark the location of the doorway and the smoke holes.
(c) Color your longhouse to show that it is covered with elm bark.

ACTIVITY 2



1. Map 1 shows the location of Long Owl's longhouse.

(a) How many longhouses are there in the village?

(b) In which ways are the longhouses different?

(c) In which ways are the longhouses the same?

2. Which sentence is most correct? Map 1 will help you.

(a) The longhouses are built in a circle around the edge of the village.

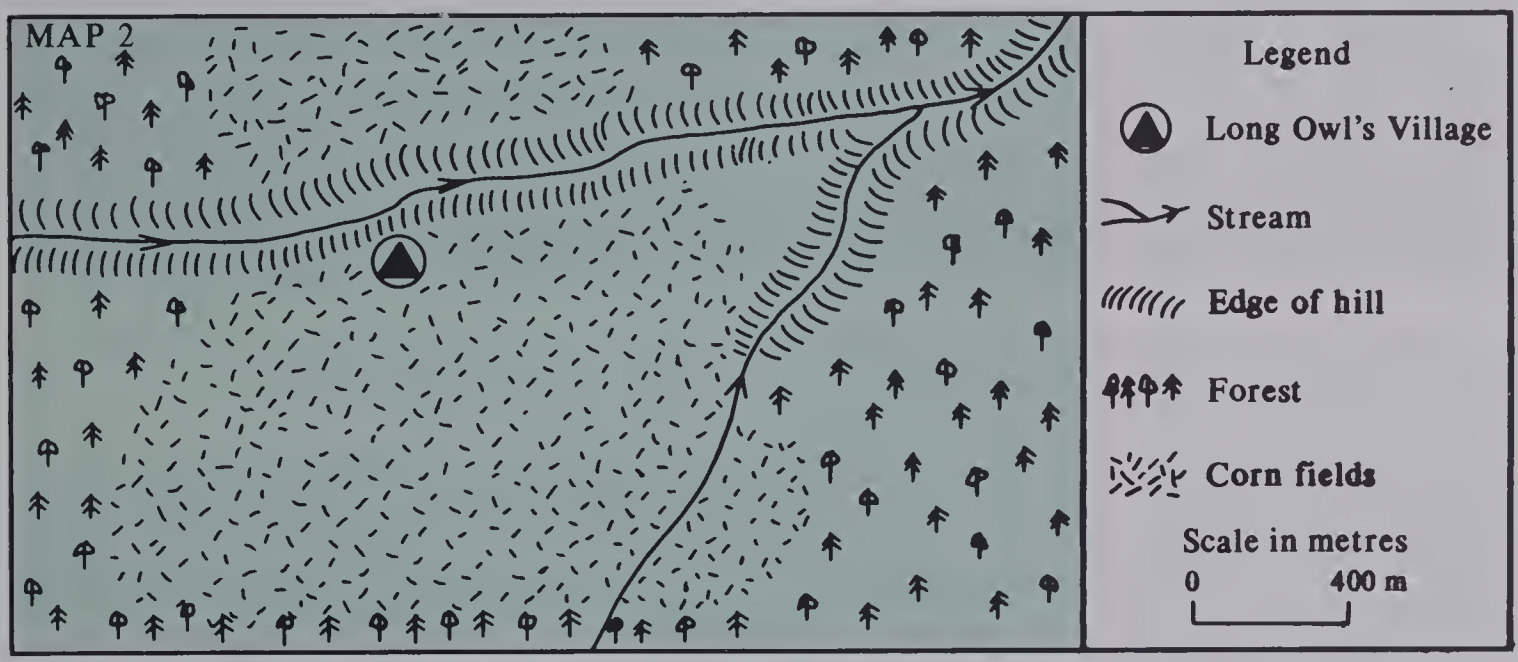
(b) The longhouses are built close together at one end of the village.

(c) The longhouses are built in the centre of the village.

3. Long Owl and the other men have also built a high fence around their village. It is called a palisade.

(a) Use the picture and the map legend on Map 1 to help you describe a palisade.

(b) What materials are used to build it?



4. (a) What map symbol on Map 2 shows the location of Long Owl's village?
(b) Why was the village probably built at this place?
(c) Why has the forest been cleared around the village?
(d) What is the cleared land used for?

5. Compare Long Owl's shelter and village to a nomad's shelter and camp. Use the photographs to help you complete this chart.

	Long Owl's Shelter and Village	Nomad's Shelter and Camp
Name of shelter Shape of shelter Size of shelter Materials covering shelter How village or camp is protected		

ACTIVITY 3

1. This picture shows part of the Eastern Woodlands.

(a) Why is the area called a woodland?

(b) The main trees that grow in this area are:

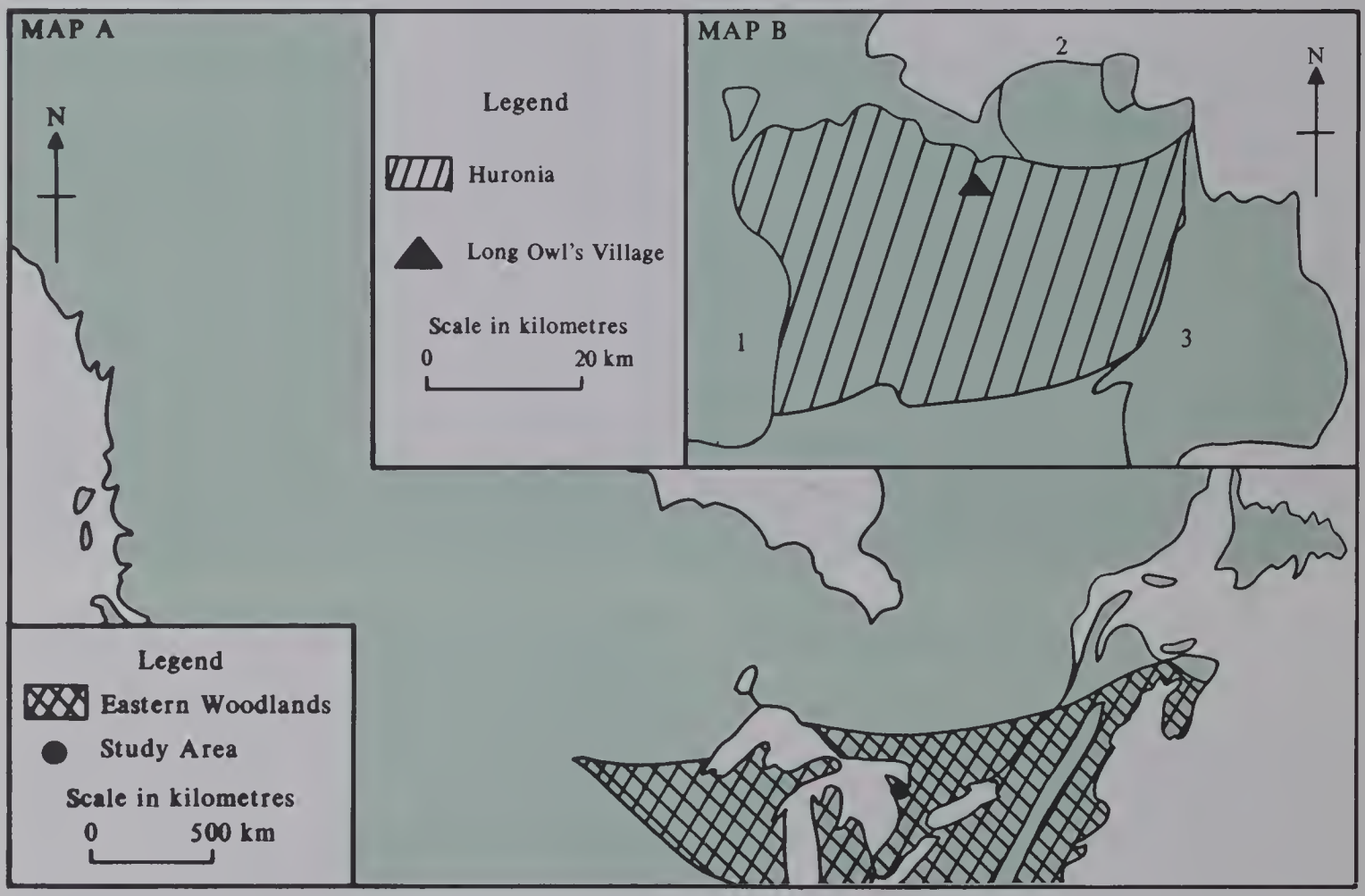
white pine	butternut
hemlock	black cherry
elm	wild plum
oak	choke cherry
cedar	

Divide these trees into two types by completing this chart in your notebook:

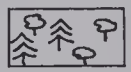
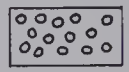
Trees of the Eastern Woodlands	
Trees which lose their leaves each autumn	Trees which stay green all year

2. (a) In which part of the Eastern Woodlands is Long Owl's village located? Use the two maps to help you.

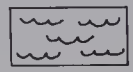
(b) Find Huronia on the Map B. Draw this map in your notebook. Name the places on the map that are numbered.



3. (a) On your map use one of these symbols to show Huronia:

i) ii)  iii) 

(b) Make up another symbol to show water areas.

water 

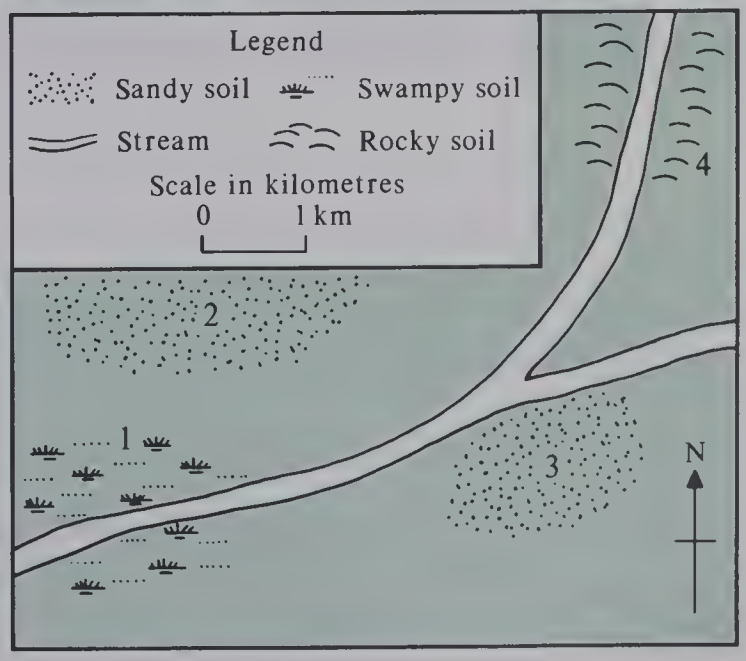
4. Corn needs about 120 days to grow before it is ready to harvest. During this time the days must be warm so that frosts will not kill the plants. There must also be over 65 mm of rain each month while the corn is growing. If there is not enough rain, the plants will die.

(a) What information on the chart shows that corn can grow in Huronia?

(b) What two things can kill the corn plants?

(c) During which three months would corn grow best? Why?

Month	Rain/ Snow	Temperature
January	99 mm	-5°C
February	76	-6
March	74	-1
April	74	6
May	71	12
June	66	18
July	81	20
August	79	20
September	99	16
October	86	9
November	89	3
December	109	-4



5. Corn plants also need good soil. The soil should be easy to work. Water must be able to seep into it. Sandy soil is best for growing corn.

(a) Which two places on this map are best for growing corn?

(b) What other things do Long Owl and the other villagers want to be close to when they build their village?

ACTIVITY 4

1. Long Owl, White Dove and the other villagers are busy clearing the forest to make a new field. Little Bear and the other children also help.

(a) What is Long Owl doing in Picture 1? How does Little Bear help?
(b) What is White Dove doing in Picture 2?
What is she putting around the tree trunk?
(c) What do the villagers do with the branches and bushes? Picture 3 will help you.

(d) Write a short report to tell how Long Owl and White Dove clear the forest. Include these words in your report.

trees	chop
branches	burn
bushes	pile
axe	clear

2. (a) What activity does Picture 4 show?
(b) What activity does Picture 5 show?
(c) What activity does Picture 6 show?

3. This chart shows when White Dove and her family work in the fields around their village.
(a) Which activity is done all summer?
(b) When are corn and other crops harvested?
(c) Why do White Dove and her family not work in the fields all year?

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Clearing fields				■	■							
Planting					■	■						
Weeding						■	■	■				
Harvesting									■			

4. These sentences are correct but they are in the wrong order.

Write them in the correct order in your notebook.

– White Dove uses a wooden spade to dig small holes in the ground.

– She also plants beans and squash in some of the little hills.

– Soon the corn and beans sprout and begins to grow.

– White Dove hoes the soil into small hills around the young, green plants.

– Once the field has been cleared, White Dove and the other women plant their crops.

– They are busy weeding the gardens.

– She covers them with earth. They also chase away the birds.

– During the rest of the summer, White Dove, the other women and the older children work all day in the fields.

– Then she drops ten corn seeds into each hole.

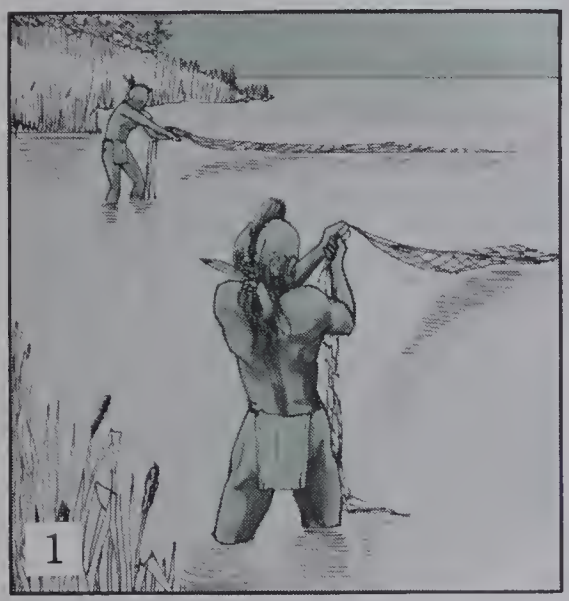
5. Long Owl, White Dove and the other villagers are called cultivators.

Find the meaning of this word in a dictionary.

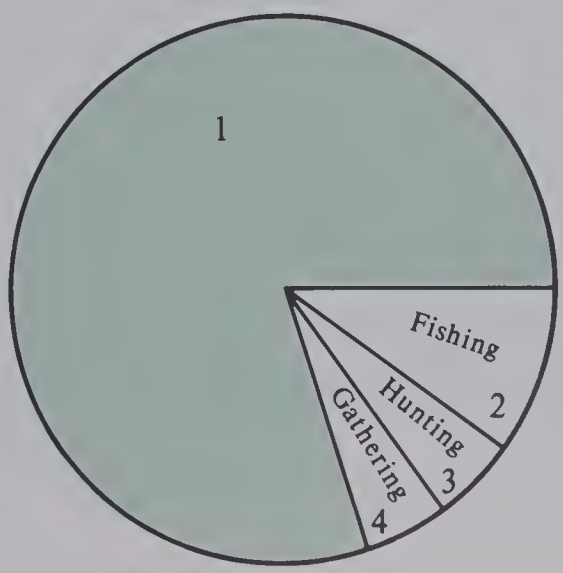
The picture also gives a clue.

ACTIVITY 5

1. (a) What food is Long Owl getting in Picture 1?
(b) What tool does he use to get this food?
(c) Describe how Long Owl is getting food in Picture 2.



2. (a) This graph shows the different ways that Long Owl and the other cultivators get food. But one method is not shown.
Draw a graph like this in your notebook. Show the four methods which the cultivators use to get food.
(b) Which method of getting food is most important?



3. Which foods do White Dove and her family eat during autumn?

(a) Which three foods are eaten throughout the year?

The chart will help you.

(b) Which title best describes the chart?

i) How Food is Obtained

ii) Foods Eaten During the Year

	Corn	Beans	Squash	Fish*	Deer	Wild Fruits
Jan.	•	•		•		
Feb.	•	•		•		
Mar.	•	•		•		
April	•	•		•	•	
May	•	•		•	•	
June	•	•		•		
July	•	•		•		
Aug.	•	•	•	•		•
Sept.	•	•	•	•		•
Oct.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Nov.	•	•	•	•	•	
Dec.	•	•		•	•	

*Includes turtles

4. Make a chart like this in your notebook:

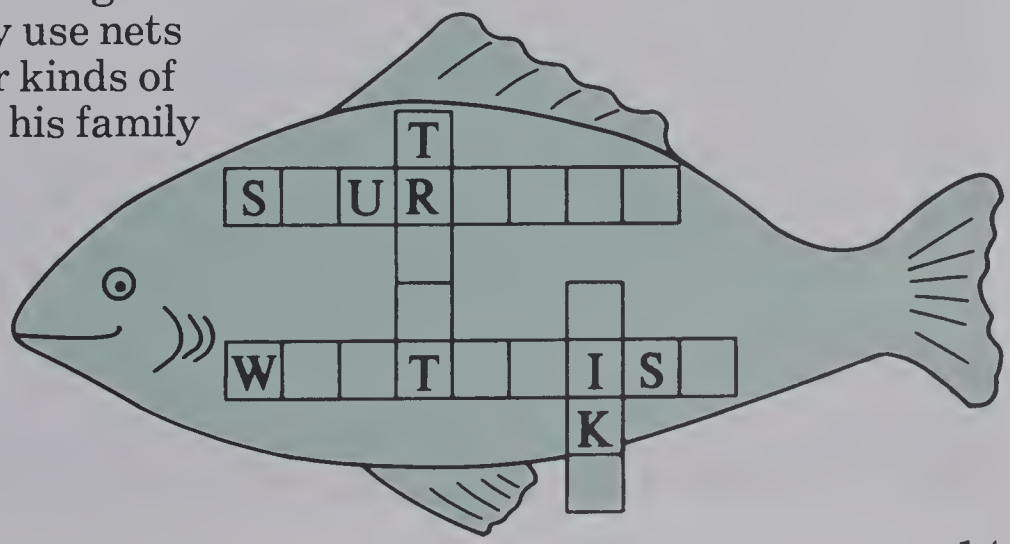
Write the name of each food in the correct column.

Foods Grown	Foods Fished	Foods Hunted	Foods Gathered

5. Little Bear likes to go fishing with his father, Long Owl. They use nets to catch the fish. Find four kinds of fish which Little Bear and his family eat.

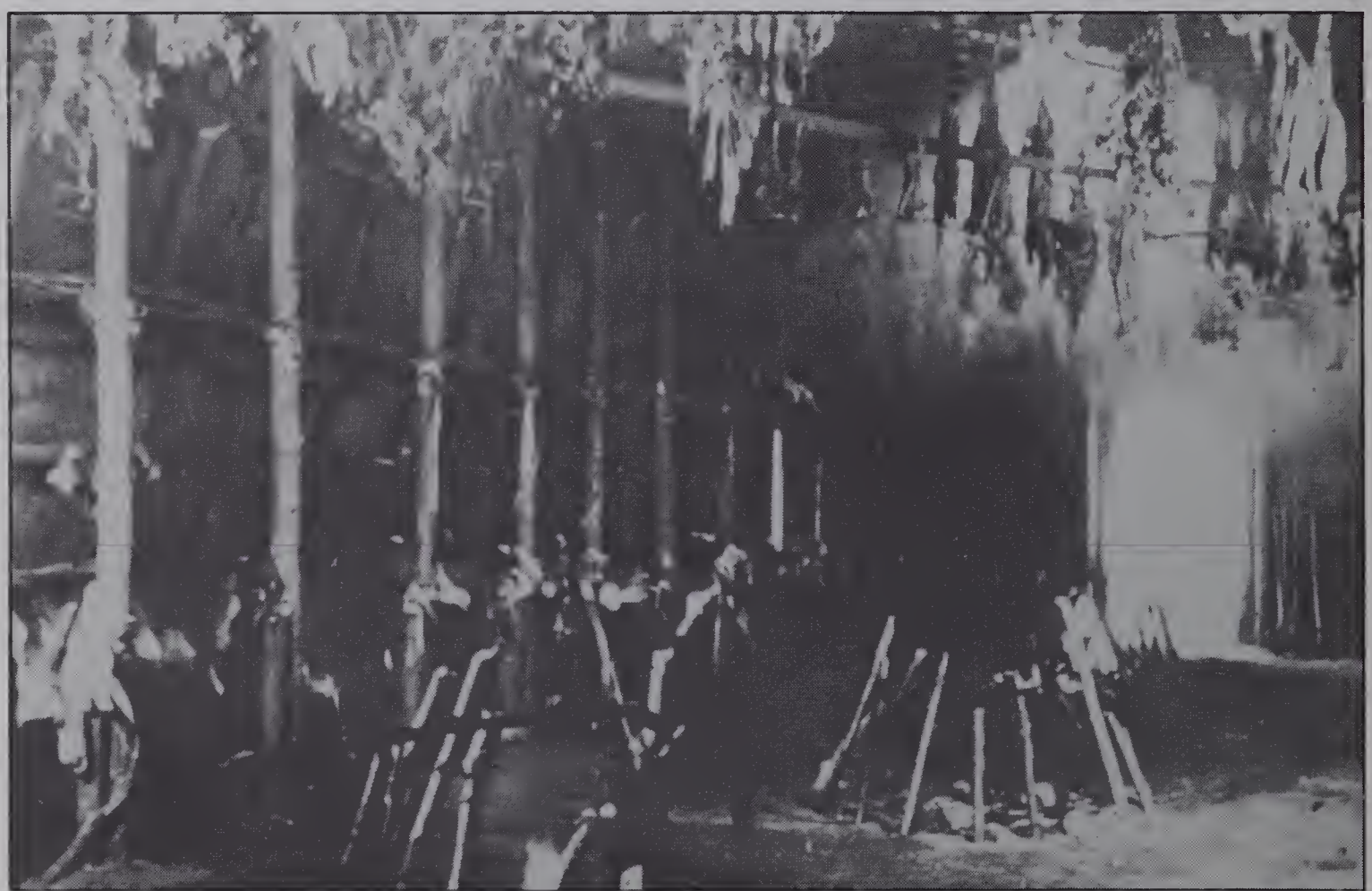
The list will help you.

cod	sturgeon
herring	sunfish
perch	trout
pike	tuna
shark	whitefish



ACTIVITY 6

1. White Dove and her family grow more corn then they need. Some of the extra corn is preserved. Then, it is stored for use during the winter. Some is used to trade with the northern hunters for things which White Dove and her family need. At harvest time, White Dove is very busy. She and Little Bear carry the ripe corn back to their longhouse. They tie it together in bundles. In which part of the longhouse is some corn stored. The picture will help you.

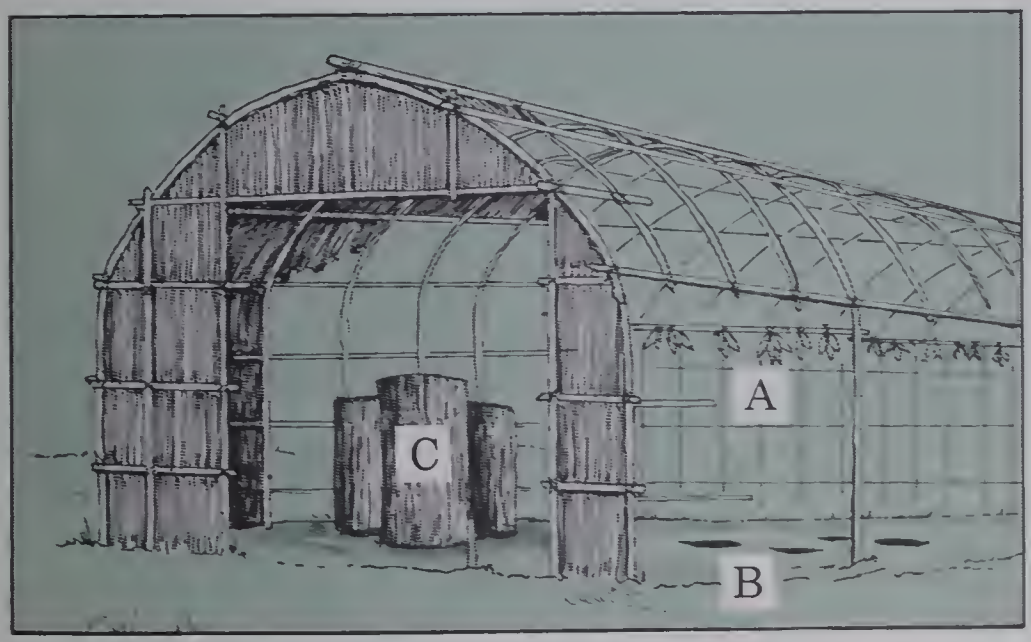


COURTESY HURONIA HISTORICAL PARKS, MIDLAND, ONTARIO

2. When the corn is dry, White Dove removes the husks from each corn cob. She places some of the cobs in large bark containers or bins.

(a) Find the location of the bins in the picture. In which part of the longhouse are these bins kept?
(b) Some of the corn is also stored inside the longhouse in pits or holes. Which letter shows these pits?
(c) Why would White Dove and the other women store some of the corn in pits in the ground?
The information on this page will help you.

The cultivators dig pits or holes in the floor of their longhouse to store food. These pits are about one metre wide and one metre deep. They put grass and bark around the bottom and sides of each pit. They place the dried corn kernels on top and cover everything with soil. This stops the mice from eating the corn. Also, if there is a fire and the lodge is destroyed, some of the corn will be left to eat and to plant.



A — Storage racks for corn and fish

B — Storage pits for corn

C — Storage bins for corn

3. Long Owl and the other men are also very busy during the harvest. They travel to lakes and rivers to catch fish for the winter. This is the time of year when many fish swim up the rivers. They catch the fish with nets. Then they clean them. Some fish are hung on racks to dry in the sun or smoked over a fire to be preserved.

(a) Where does White Dove place the fish on the smoke rack?
Use the picture to help you.

(b) Where is the best place for the fire? Why?
(c) Why do you think a bark roof covers the smoke rack?

4. (a) White Dove uses some of the dried corn for the evening meal. Use this picture to tell how she grinds the corn to make corn flour, or cornmeal.

(b) When she has enough flour, White Dove boils it in a clay pot filled with water. She adds pieces of dried fish and some dried squash to make a soup. When it is ready, Long Owl and Little Bear dip their bowls into the large soup pot. Often they sit outside the longhouse and talk as they eat.

What things does White Dove use to make soup?

5. Sometimes White Dove makes cornbread. She mixes some cornmeal with water and dried fruit. Then she wraps the tiny loaves in corn leaves. She cooks them in hot ashes in the fireplace.

(a) Which word best describes how White Dove cooks cornbread?

boil
bake
barbeque

(b) Name the kinds of bread that you eat.

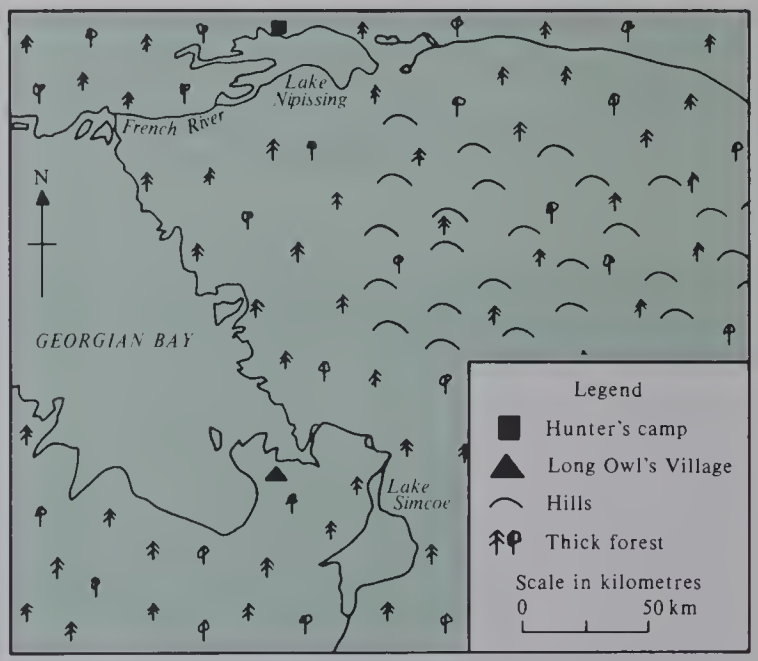
(c) Which word tells how bread is cooked?

fry
bake
roast

ACTIVITY 7

1. It is the time of year when the maple leaves turn yellow and red. The lakes are not yet frozen. But, the days are getting cold. The hunting is very poor. There is little food stored for winter. The northern hunters in the land of many rocks, lakes and pine trees, decide to travel south. There, they will trade with the cultivators. They will take skins of moose, elk and deer to trade. Some of the hunters will stay near the cultivator's village for the winter.
(a) What do the hunters need?
(b) What could they trade their skins and furs for at the cultivators village?

2. Two days later, at sunrise, the hunters load their furs and skins into their canoes. They also take their bows and arrows to use along the way. The chief has given the hunters a special necklace of wampum beads. These beads were made from clam shells of different colours. This gift will be given to Red Fox, the chief of the cultivator's village.
(a) How will the northern hunters travel to Long Owl's village?



3. (a) Copy this map into your notebook. On your map mark the hunter's route from their camp to Long Owl's Village. Remember, they will travel by water.

(b) How far do the men travel from their camp to the village? The map scale will help you.

(c) Why do they travel by water instead of by land? Remember why they are visiting the cultivators. The map legend also gives a clue.

4. Some days later, the hunters reach Long Owl's village. They give the chief wampum beads as a gift. The chief makes a speech. He invites everyone to a large feast. The next day, Long Owl wants to get some deer hides and some beaver skins. He offers to trade four large baskets of cornmeal for them. The hunters finally agree. The trade is made. Soon all the baskets of cornmeal and the fish nets are traded for hides and furs. This method of trade is called:

buying,
selling,
bartering,
borrowing.

5. After trading, everyone admires the new skins and furs. White Dove plans to make some beaver skin mitts for Little Bear. She also wants to make new moccasins for her family.
(a) These possessions belong to Long Owl and White Dove. Which ones are made from materials the cultivators get by trading with the northern hunters?

cornleaf mats
clay pots
wood bowls
deerskin jackets
mooseskin moccasins
kemp fish nets
beaver skin hats and mitts
wood and bone bow and arrow
birchbark canoe

ACTIVITY 8

1. Which title best describes these pictures?
(a) How the Cultivators get their Food
(b) Main Activities of the Cultivators during each Season
(c) Daily Activities of the Cultivators

2. (a) During which seasons does White Dove work in the fields? The picture will help you.

(b) Which activity is done during both spring and fall?

Which is most correct?

(c) The cultivators spend much of the year _____.

feasting
making things
getting and growing food
weeding

3. Use the pictures to help you complete this chart:

Important Activities of the Cultivators				
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Men				
Women				
Children				

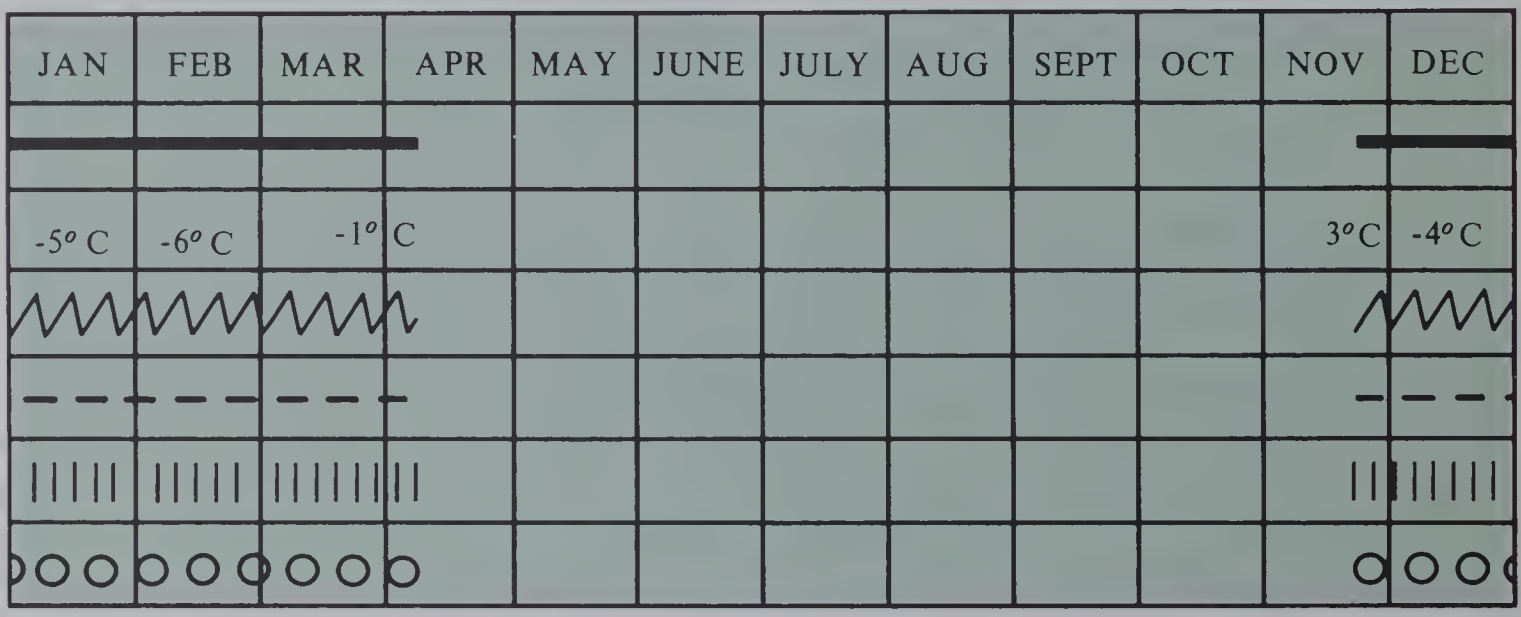
4. (a) Which season does this chart describe?

How can you tell?

(b) What do the cultivators do during this season?

(c) Where do they probably do these activities, indoors or outdoors? Why?

(d) Which activity on the chart is shown in the pictures?



Snow cover	
Average temperatures	-5° C

Making possessions	
Feasting	

Telling stories	
Visiting	

5. Write a story to tell what Little Bear might do during a winter evening. Choose an activity from this chart to help you.

ACTIVITY 9

1. One cold night in winter, Little Bear sat by the fire. All of a sudden, Old Wolf rushed into the longhouse. He told everyone that their chief, Red Fox, was very ill. A special curing ceremony would start the next day. It would help the chief get well.

Both Long Owl and White Dove took part in this ceremony.

They wore wooden masks. They also carried wooden sticks. They thought bad spirits inside the chief were making him ill.

All night long the cultivators chanted and danced to drive out these bad spirits from Red Fox.

(a) What does the picture show about the curing dance?

(b) In our society, how do we help someone who is ill?

2. Red Fox was ill for a long time. Not until the snow melted did the sickness leave him.

Little Bear wonders how the chief became ill. He believes that everything is controlled by spirits. Some spirits are good. They help people. Other spirits are bad. They bring harm to a person if they get inside the person's body.

Little Bear's uncle tells him a story about a bad spirit. The bad spirit is called Aataentsic (A-ta-ent-sick). This spirit sometimes causes people to become sick.

This is how Aataentsic came to earth and how the earth was formed.

A long time ago, Aataentsic lived in a village in the sky. One day, her husband became very ill. He needed a special medicine from the forest. So, Aataentsic went far into the forest to get the medicine. Suddenly, she fell into a deep hole. The hole seemed to have no end. Aataentsic fell downward for a long time. The great turtle saw that Aataentsic was in trouble. He quickly called all the water animals together. He asked them to help. The animals swam to the bottom of the sea. There, they dug up some soil. They piled the soil on the great turtle's back. The great turtle quickly swam under Aataentsic to catch her. Aataentsic landed on the soft earth on the great turtle's back. That is how the earth was formed. That is how Aataentsic, the bad spirit, came to earth.

Why was Aataentsic believed to be a bad spirit?

ACTIVITY 10

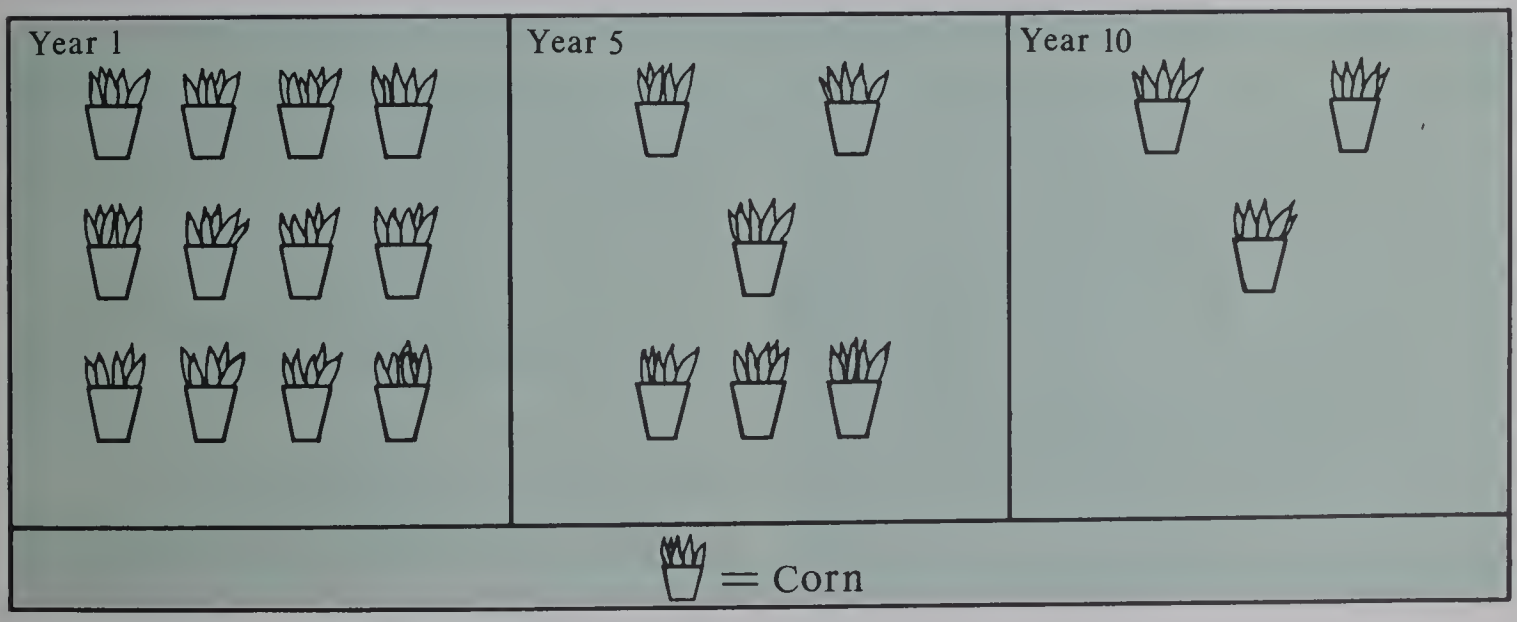
1. Winter is over. Spring returns again. The ice on the lakes and rivers melts. Ducks and geese swim on the open water.

White Dove and the other men collect sweet sap from sugar maple trees. Long Owl and the other men go fishing for lake trout and sturgeon. The children gather firewood.

It is time to prepare the fields for planting corn. The cultivators have lived in the same village for ten winters. They have cultivated the same fields for ten summers. They know that each year it is harder to grow corn in the same fields. they do not know that plants take minerals from the soil for foods. When corn is planted in the same field each year, the minerals in the soil are soon used up. Then the corn will not grow very well.

(a) What do these pictures show about the size of the corn harvest during three different years?

(b) What has happened to cause this change?



2. Long Owl and the other cultivators have lived in the same village for 10 years. Each year, they must clear more land to grow enough corn. Now the fields are too large. It is hard for the cultivators to weed so much land. It is very difficult for them to keep the birds away from the corn.

The fields are also too far from the village. The cultivators want to be close to their village in case enemies attack them. They want to gather firewood close to their village. But now the forest is too far away.

The chief and his council hold a meeting. They decide to build a new village some place else. There, they will also clear new fields. Then, they can grow enough corn close to their new village.

(a) List three reasons for moving the village.

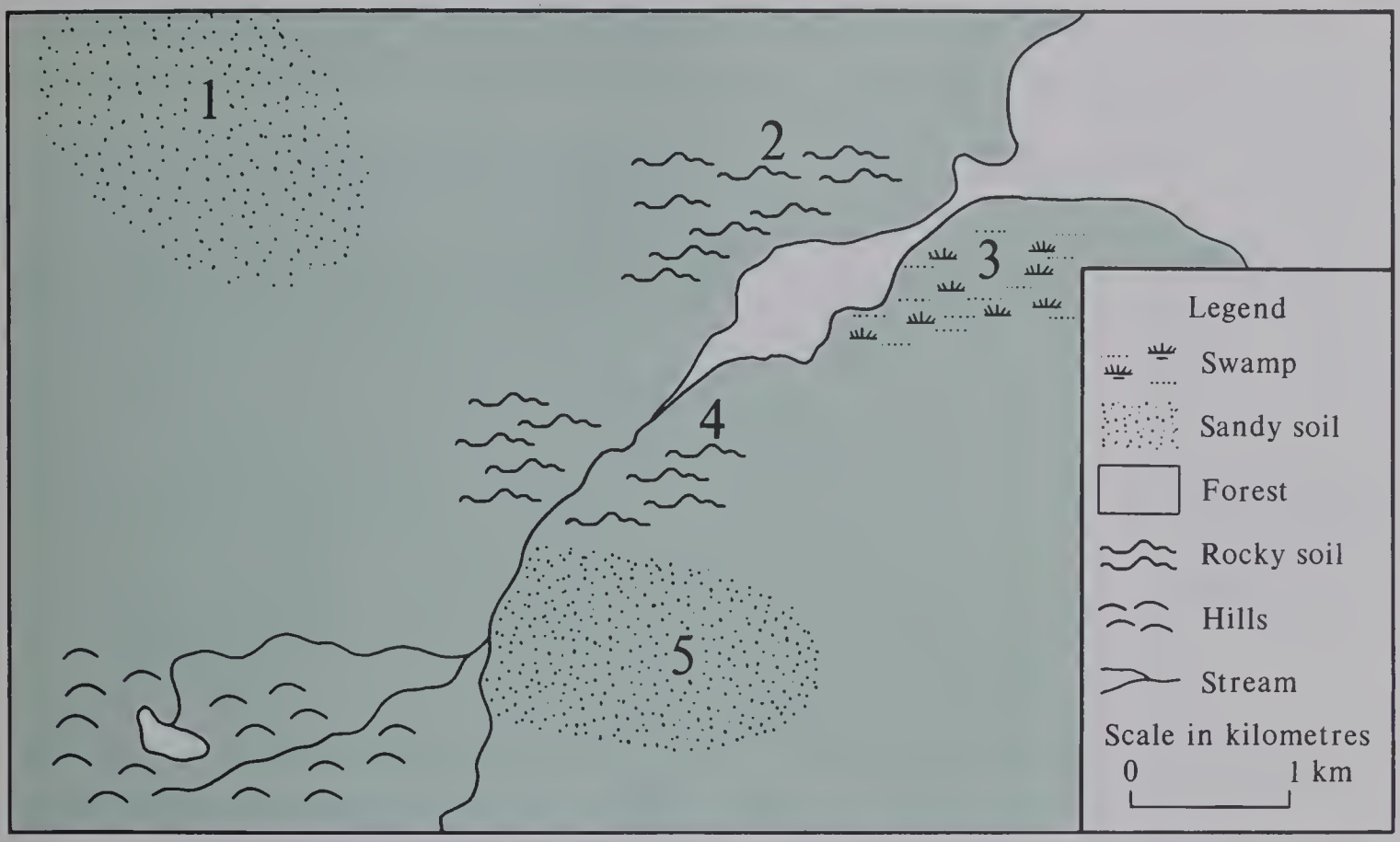
(b) Which reason is most important?

3. Long Owl and the other men begin to look for a new place to build a village. Two days later, Old Wolf, has found a good site for a village.

It is on a small hill near a stream.
There are many trees close by.
The soil nearby is sandy.

(a) Why do the cultivators want a place with many trees nearby?

(b) Why do they need sandy soil near their village?



4. Which number on this map shows the best site for a village?

5. (a) Write a story to tell how Little Bear feels about leaving the old village.

OR

Draw a picture to show Long Owl helping to build a palisade around the new village.

ENRICHMENT

This map was made in 1657. It shows where the Cultivators and Traders of the Eastern Woodlands, or the Hurons lived. It also shows some of their activities.

(a) How can you tell that this is an old map?
(b) Locate on the map the area where the cultivators lived.
(c) What activities or customs are shown?
(d) What important food-getting activity is not shown?

To the Teacher:

The hilly, mixed forest region of Huronia onced served as the habitat for the Huron whose subsistence was based largely upon cultivation. During the pre-contact period, the density of population in this region prevented the Huron from developing a hunting and gathering subsistence economy. These activities however, were pursued to partially supplement their dietary and material needs.

This book was compiled from information obtained from the written reports of specialists on Huron enthnography. It examines the Huron during the pre-contact period, prior to 1615, and before their numbers were drastically reduced by disease and warfare. Reports of early European observers such as Champlain as well as from archeological evidence, indicate that the Huron inhabited a number of villages, varying in size from 300 to 2,400 occupants. These were scattered throughout the region in locations suitable for both cultivation and defense purposes. Each member of the community had well-defined tasks. These were regulated by seasonal changes and revolved around food producing and food procuring activities.

During much of the year, most of the men left the villages on hunting, fishing, trading or war expeditions. The women were absent only during the summer months when the demands of tending the crops necessitated that they camp in the fields. As winter approached, the villages became fully occupied once again. It was during the winter months that Algonkian bands wintered either in or near the Huron villages to trade. At that time too, other inter and intra-tribal relations took place through sports competitions and special ceremonies.

About once every ten years, the village was abandoned and a new village constructed a few kilometres away. This move was necessitated by a combination of factors, the most significant being soil exhaustion and its resultant decline in corn yields, the depletion of nearby firewood resources and the increasing size of the fields and their distance from the protection of the village.

This group of cultivators was selected for the Vanishing Communities Series to help pupils better understand how a simply-organized community once survived in the temperate, mixed forest environment of Canada.

Each activity has been organized to allow for both interpretive and analytical thinking. Through these activities, the learner is directed towards basic understandings about a community whose way of life was based on shifting cultivation. A variety of chart, map, photograhic, pictorial and tabular information has been incorporated to assist the pupil in the learning process by providing him or her with different kinds of data. Following are the skill objectives and understandings related to each activity in this book:

Sugested reading for Teachers:

Heidenreich, Conrad, *Huronia: A History and Geography of the Huron Indians, 1600-1650.* McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1971.

Trigger, Bruce, *The Huron: Farmers of the North.* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.

Skill Objectives:

1. Examine pictures and a floor plan to note the size, shape and function of the longhouse and the materials used to build it.

2. Translate maps to assess the size and shape of the protected village and in chart-form compare the village to a hunters' camp.

3. Use a picture, a map and a chart to note the relationship of the climate, soils and vegetation of Huronia and their suitability for growing corn.

4. Compare pictures to note the progression of preparing fields for growing corn and apply this information to a chart to discover that the most important summer activity relates to corn cultivation.

5. Interpret pictures and a chart to conclude the important ways of obtaining food and the kinds of food eaten during the year.

6. Analyze pictures and text to list three ways of storing the staple food, corn and outline the method of making cornmeal and cornbread.

7. List which trade items the cultivators barter with the northern hunters and which ones they use to make their possessions.

8. Interpret pictures of seasonal activities and summarize this information in chart form. Analyze a winter activities chart.

9. Interpret a myth to explain a special ceremony.

10. Summarize the reasons for moving the village to a new location and apply this information to complete a map problem.

Understandings:

1. The communal longhouses of the Huron, made from wood and bark, are used primarily for storing food. possessions and firewood, sleeping and cooking.

2. Within the palisaded village are a number of longhouses which vary in size but are similar in shape.

3. The Eastern Woodlands, characterized by a mixed-forest vegetation, have a climate and soils suitable for corn cultivation.

4. Once the forest has been cleared by the slash and burn method, the most important summer activity revolves around corn cultivation.

5. The Hurons' diet includes mainly cultivated food. Foods obtained by hunting, fishing and gathering only partly supplement their diet.

6. Surplus food is dried and stored inside the longhouse for consumption in winter and as an item for trade.

7. In late fall, the Algonkian hunters from the Lake Nipissing area travel south to barter furs and skins for surplus cornmeal. The Huron use these furs and skins to make such items as clothing and bedding.

8. Each member of the village has specific tasks which are regulated by the cold and warm seasons.

9. The cultivators' belief in the behavior and power of spirits is manifested by the Curing Ceremony.

10. The combination of declining corn yields, and size and distance of fields and forest from the village determines when the cultivators move to a new location.

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